

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

SIGN

Impact Washington

SIGN Improves Productivity with Business Coach Training

Client Profile:

Surgical Implant Generation Network (SIGN) is a manufacturer of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved orthopaedic implants for long bone fractures. SIGN is known throughout the orthopaedic community for the development of orthopaedic implants that can be used in developing world conditions and for the orthopaedic training it makes available to surgeons in developing countries. Since its inception in 1999, SIGN has been the only organization that combines training and a sustainable supply of orthopaedic implants to local surgeons so that they can provide timely surgical care to their trauma patients. The company employs 29 people at its facility in Richland, Washington.

Situation:

The original employees at SIGN were learning how to lead on the job and didn't have the resources available to attend outside leadership training. SIGN had become aware of Impact Washington, a NIST MEP network affiliate, through its local Education Development Center (EDC) partner at their annual Smartmap Expo. The company brought in Impact Washington to guide them through employee and company growth.

Solution:

Impact Washington project manager Patric Sazama met with SIGN management to gain an understanding of the company and their customers to let them know the leadership skills they would need in order to accomplish the engineering and manufacturing goals required to respond to their patients' needs overseas. Sazama, an experienced business coach, then played the role of mentor and advisor and began training the company's leadership to bring them up to the next level. He worked with the CEO in setting and implementing a vision for the company. Through the training and mentoring, the operations manager developed long-term plans and skills to motivate staff to implement productivity improvements. As a result of Impact Washington's assistance, staff have gained a better understanding of expectations and have more open communication throughout the company.

Results:

- * Improved productivity by 100 percent.
- * Reduced costs by 15 percent.
- * Boosted employee morale.

Testimonial:

"Patric Sazama's mentorship has guided SIGN's leadership towards setting appropriate design and manufacturing goals as well as personal development goals. We needed a mentor like Patric to give us a jump start on developing a company that can respond quickly to the growing orthopaedic needs of the developing world. Our challenge has been to balance our personal leadership growth with the

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learning curve required to run a company that is both a non-profit humanitarian organization and an orthopaedic implant company, and Patric has helped us achieve that goal."

Jeanne Dillner, CEO